

Site Activities Update

Devil's Swamp Lake Site

Alsen, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana

September 2011

This Fact Sheet will tell you about...

- Current activities
- What's next?
- Technical Assistance Grant
- Site history
- Where to get more information

Current activities

The preliminary results from the Tier 1 Remedial Investigation (RI) are in and the documents will be reviewed by the EPA. These documents have also been distributed to EPA's contractors, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), the TAG recipient, and other State and Federal agencies, for review. The comments will be used to revise the document, and if acceptable by the EPA and LDEQ, the document will be finalized.

The objectives of the plan were met and include:

- Site characterization to determine the nature and extent of impacts at the site.
- Completion of a screening level Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) to identify human health constituents of potential concern.
- Completion of a Screening Level Ecological Risk Assessment (SLERA) to identify constituents of potential ecological concern.

Human Health Risks:

- No unacceptable risks were noted from exposure to soils or exposed sediments to industrial/commercial workers or trespassers in the area of Devil's Swamp or Devil's Swamp Lake.
- No unacceptable risks were noted to a recreational swimmer in the same areas.
- Other than potential intermittent wading in the Drainage Ditch, the only potential pathway of concern to be further evaluated in the Tier 2 investigation is the consumption of fish. Currently a fish consumption advisory is in effect.

Ecological Risks:

- Potential ecological risk exists for wildlife and/or fish that utilize the Site. This risk will be further evaluated in the development of the Tier 2 investigation.

What's next?

The investigation will proceed with a more in-depth risk evaluation of the initially identified contaminants and likely exposure pathways. EPA will then develop a Tier 2 work plan, sampling plan and eventually a second round of sample collection/field activities.

The EPA will continue to update the community when the Tier 1 report becomes final and the Tier 2 investigation gets under way, through fact sheets, public meetings and our Superfund Site Summaries on the EPA Region 6 Website.

The LDEQ and the EPA, through their oversight contractors, will monitor field activities and will analyze samples from the same locations.

Clean Harbors, EPA, LDEQ and other regulators will evaluate the results of this Tier 2 RI to identify further work to be conducted.

Technical Assistance Grant (TAG)

In July 2010, the EPA awarded a TAG to Alsen/St. Irma Lee Community Enterprise, Inc.

The Alsen/St. Irma Lee Community Enterprise, Inc. has used the grant funds to hire a technical advisor to interpret site test results and other technical reports in order to increase community understanding of the technical and scientific information available on the Devil's Swamp Lake Site. The TAG group has selected Mr. Daniel G. Schuler of Nave Environmental, LLC as the Technical Advisor.

The technical advisor can:

- Meet with the community-at-large to explain technical information;
- Provide assistance in communicating community concerns about the site to EPA;
- Distribute interpretations of technical/scientific information to the community;
- Visit the site and community to gain a better understanding of EPA's activities and the Superfund process; and
- Attend site related meetings and/or hearings.

Site history

Devil's Swamp is in a large flood plain area which consists of Devil's Swamp Lake and areas of Devil's Swamp immediately adjoining the lake. This swamp is near Alsen, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, about ten miles north of the City of Baton Rouge. Devil's Swamp Lake Site is characterized as a man-made lake, resulting from the construction of the Port of Greater Baton Rouge Terminal (a.k.a. Baton Rouge Barge Harbor) in 1973.

The Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc. (Clean Harbors), formerly Rollins Environmental Services of Louisiana, Inc., is located northeast of the Baton Rouge Barge Harbor and west of Scenic Highway. Rollins began operating a hazardous chemical disposal facility in 1971. This facility is adjacent to Devil's Swamp.

The LDEQ confirmed the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in sediments from Devil's Swamp Lake and along the wastewater ditch from the former Rollins facility.

In October 1987, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH) and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries issued a fish consumption advisory for Devil's Swamp Lake. The current advisory recommends that fish not be consumed more than two meals per month, taken in the areas of Devil's Swamp, Devil's Swamp Lake, and Bayou Baton Rouge.

The EPA, in conjunction with the LDEQ, proposed to place the Devil's Swamp Lake Site on the National Priorities List (NPL). The NPL is EPA's list of uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for long term cleanup under the Federal Superfund Program.

In November 2009, LDHH completed a Health Consultation on the Alsen Community water supply. The Alsen water comes primarily from the Scenic Highway and Jetson wells using the Layton well as a back-up source. Contamination concentrations detected in the three wells were below comparison values and it was determined the water posed no concerns for peoples' health and that no public health actions are needed at this time.

On December 3, 2009, the EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order (Order) to compel potentially responsible parties to conduct a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study to evaluate the extent of contamination and environmental risks. Clean Harbors, on behalf of Baton Rouge Disposal, LLC (Respondent to this Order) is currently conducting this study.

In April 2010, representatives of Clean Harbors, their consultant, EPA, LDEQ, and other Federal and State regulators participated in a site visit that included a walking tour of the drainage ditch and the levee on the east side of Devil's Swamp Lake.

In July 2010, a draft work plan to conduct the study was submitted to the State and Federal regulators. This document was reviewed, comments were provided, and the document was further revised and finalized.

In November 2010 the final work plan proposed to conduct the investigation in a tiered approach consisting of two phases or steps. The first phase is covered in the Tier 1 RI Work Plan. This phase included initial characterization of the extent of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) at the site; determination if a human health risk assessment is required; comparison of contaminants to screening criteria; and completion of a screening level ecological risk assessment. Further evaluation was to be conducted during Tier 2 RI if necessary.

Where to get more information

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All inquiries from the media should be directed to the Region 6 Press Office at 214.665.2200.

Devil's Swamp Lake Superfund site
www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/pdffiles/0600652.pdf

Site Repository

Scotlandville Branch Library
7373 Scenic Hwy
Baton Rouge, LA 70807